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SECURITY INFORMATION

5 April 1953

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SUMMARY

FAR EAST

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- 5. Comment on effect of release of Moscow doctors on the Arabs and Israel (page 5).

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FAR EAST

3.3(h)(2)

1. Communists halt movement of goods into Korea:



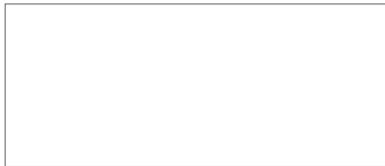
Comment:



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possible that the above action may have been taken in anticipation of an early cease-fire. In the past, stoppages have been occasioned by either the lack of storage facilities or damaged rail lines in North Korea, but these factors are not known to be responsible in the present case.

2. South Korea urges bilateral defense pact with US:



South Korean Foreign Minister Pyun has strongly urged that the US Government enter into a bilateral defense pact with Korea. Ambassador Briggs suggests that such a pact may be a quid pro quo for the withdrawal of South Korean opposition to an armistice. 3.3(h)(2)

Comment: This is the first suggestion that the South Korean Government might agree to an armistice which would leave Korea divided. During the past week, South Korean legislative and executive officials have expressed opposition to an armistice as currently contemplated by the UN.

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3. Merchant shipping to Communist China reaches high point in February:



During the month of February, 45 merchant ships totaling 297,000 gross tons arrived in Communist China from overseas. This is the largest number of such arrivals observed during any one month since the May 1951 embargo on shipment of strategic goods to China. 3.3(h)(2)

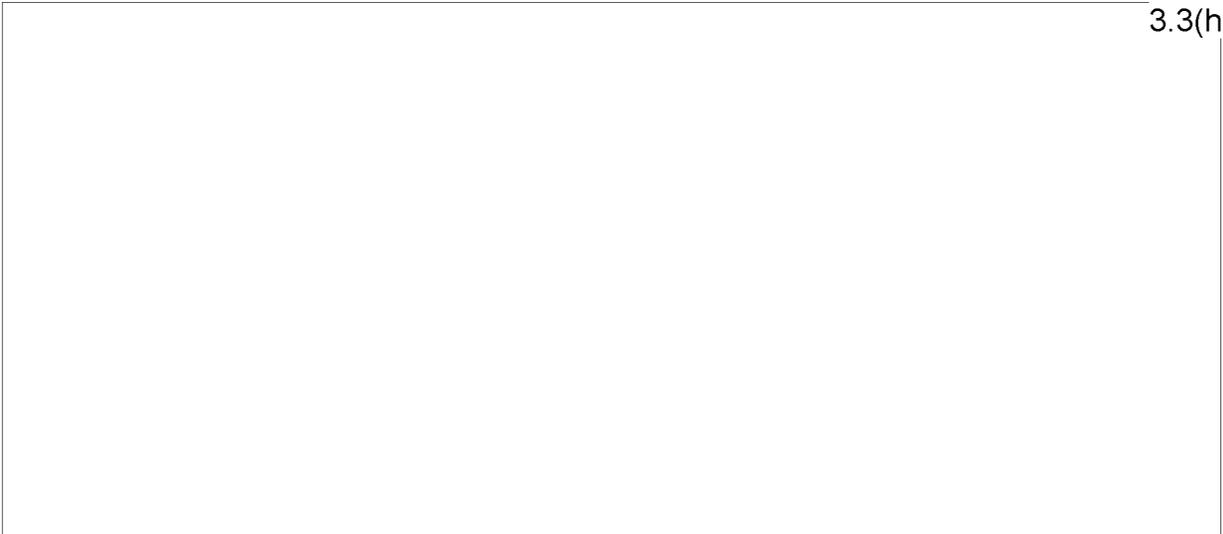
About half of these vessels were of non-Communist registry, mainly British and Greek. The Communist ships were Russian and Polish.

Comment: The tonnage arriving in Communist China from overseas during February was more than twice the monthly average in 1952. There has been no corresponding increase in shipping arriving at Chinese Communist ports from Hong Kong.

The shipping figures reflect Peiping's progress in decreasing its dependence on Hong Kong middlemen by establishing direct contact with European sources of supply.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

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3.3(h)(2)

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

5. Comment on effect of release of Moscow doctors on the Arabs and Israel:

The Soviet announcement that the charges against the "Moscow doctors" are being dropped immediately raises hopes in Tel Aviv and causes apprehension in Arab capitals.

Israel, deeply distressed over the Soviet-initiated break, can now indulge in cautious optimism that formal diplomatic relations may be restored. Even more important to Zionism is the renewal of the hope that Moscow may some day permit Tel Aviv to continue the "ingathering of the exiles." The hope of a re-establishment of relations with Moscow in turn offers the Ben-Gurion government the possibility of returning to its position of nominal neutrality, thus affording more scope for maneuvering in international relations.

An improvement in Israeli-Soviet relations, however, would immediately create more internal problems for the Israeli Government. Leftists and Communist political groups now quiescent would reassert themselves and resume their traditional role.

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The Arabs, who have viewed the Soviet-Israeli break with cautious satisfaction, will see in the Moscow announcement a hint of Soviet-Israeli rapprochement. They will fear that a release by the Orbit of part of its 2,500,000 Jews will result in new Israeli territorial aspirations.

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